

WAYS OF THE WAN- DERING PFDDLERS

Goes Far Out into the Country to Create Trade—Covers Whole States—Wagon Men the Aristocrats—Most of Them Become Merchants.

The wandering peddler, who, with his wonderful pack of wonderfully assorted goods, used to come around to homes in the residence parts of the cities has in the last few years diminished rapidly in numbers until he is now almost, if not quite, extinct in the city. There are, according to a man who does an extensive business in peddlers' supplies, not over half a dozen general peddlers in the city. These for the most part confine themselves and their packs to the foreign districts, particularly to the Ghetto. So, as far as the city at large is concerned, it is practically in this day and age without peddlers. Occasionally there comes to the back door a woman or girl or even an old man selling articles, but the real peddler, he who spread out his pack and showed an assortment of goods ranging from a bar of tar soap to a small melodeon, is seldom seen, says the Chicago Tribune.

Department stores, it is alleged, are the force that have driven the wandering merchants out of business in the city. The gradual cheapening of small goods and notions, extensive advertisement of innumerable small general stores throughout the city have all helped to make the peddler's vocation unprofitable here. But the peddler is still at his trade. Deprived of the opportunity to make a livelihood by following it in the city, he has not abandoned it and gone into something else, as do many. He has taken himself and his pack away from the influence of hostile stores and now does his peddling in the country.

Where before his district was limited by streets it is now measured by counties and even States. He knows that the city housewives will have none of him because of the bargains that may be had at the department stores, but he knows also that the farmers' wife, out in the country, where department stores are unknown, is ready and even anxious to look at his stock, and, being a thorough business man in all instances, the peddler wastes no time in this city, but goes countryward when his pack is complete.

There are in the city two large downtown firms who make a specialty of dealing with general peddlers. Over in the Ghetto district, where by far the majority of the peddlers come from, there are to be found a half dozen more who do a similar business. The stocks carried by these houses comprise every imaginable thing that can be carried by a peddler. There are imported razors from Germany, wax matches from Italy, perfumes from France, suspenders, shoe laces, and caps that are all made within stone throw of the place where the pack is made up; everything that one sees in the windows of a small notion store is to be found in the stock which the peddler may choose from.

The amounts that the prospective peddler is forced to invest before he has sufficient stock to take the road varies with what he intends to sell, the country he is going into, and the state of his finance. There are peddlers' stocks in which the average cost of the items contained is only one cent apiece. The variety that obtains in this stock will surprise the layman, and its cost is sometimes as low as \$.50. To prove the shrewdness and business capacity of the men who take out these small packs an outfitter said it was not infrequent for one of them to be gone one month and then come back with \$50 to show that he had disposed of his stock profitably.

From the \$5 packs, which are seldom taken out unless as a side line, the peddler's investment runs up to \$200 and \$300; but when one of them goes out with such a stock he has a wagon and generally a helper to assist him in his work. These peddlers are the aristocrats of the profession and the envy of all those who have not yet attained to the dignity of a horse and wagon. They leave the city with their stock generally in the spring and if they go to the North, or in the States adjoining, they stay out until snow and inclement weather actually drive man and beast back to the city for the winter. If they go South they sometimes stay out a full year and reach far down into Louisiana and other Southern States in their travels. When they return it is sometimes with a store of money taken from the rural districts in the city might envy.

The peddlers who reaches to the height of owning his horse and wagon and stock is in reality a wandering storekeeper. His stock is as complete as many small general stores, sometimes even including a small stock of clothing of all kinds. But there are comparatively few who do this. The great majority of the peddlers, who

outfit from this city and go into the surrounding country invest \$5 to \$30 in their stocks. This gives them an assortment as large as they can conveniently carry, and when they wish to replenish any part of it the same can be shipped to wherever they may be along the road.

Not all peddlers who go out pay for their own stocks. Each of the houses who outfit peddlers in this city has in its employ several peddlers who sell goods from house to house, much after the manner of traveling salesmen. They receive a commission, and it is in this way that the peddler generally enters the business when his capital is depleted. Sometimes their earnings would be considered good wages by most workers; again, they come home with only a few dollars to their credit. As far as profits on the goods sold go, it is doubtful if there is any business that pays the percentage that the peddler's does. A paper of assorted needles bought for 25 cents a dozen sells for 10 cents each. This is a little more than the average profits of the peddler, for in the sections of the country adjacent to large cities the price on all articles is cut lower than it is in the sparsely settled regions.

The percentage which the "commission peddler" receives is all that is left after he has returned for the goods at the outfitter's price. The outfitter fixes a price to the peddler, and this he must return on all goods sold. The rest is his own. This makes his percentage of profit entirely dependent upon the prices he will charge, and the Ghetto product is never weak-hearted when it comes to a question of profits. The advantage in this kind of peddling lies in the fact that the outfitter will take back such goods as are unsold, provided they are returned in good condition, the peddler not losing by taking out a large stock.

The peddler of this year is a merchant of next. Nearly all of them save money and go into business in a more stable form. These wanderers generally find the best fields for their endeavors when they decide to quit the road in a small country town. The town recently founded in a new country attracts them, and they betake themselves and their families out of Chicago's Ghetto and with a stock of Chicago-bought goods become storekeepers in the small towns. The number that does this each year is large enough to warrant the statement of one dealer, who said that all peddlers make money.

WOMAN HATES FORMER LOVER

Mrs. Dahlberg's Suit Against a Millionaire Contractor of Chicago.

CHICAGO, Sept. 20.—After more than three years of delay in the courts, in which time she claims she has been hounded and persecuted, Mrs. Augusta Dahlberg is to have her suit for \$200,000 against William Grace, the well-known contractor, brought to trial. The suit, which is for alleged slanderous remarks and defamation of character, was begun in August, 1900, and is one of the first cases on the call for the coming fall term.

"I would have given my life to have saved him once," Mrs. Dahlberg said yesterday, "but now I hate him. He has tried to drive me to suicide, and has made me suffer more than I can tell."

"Twelve years ago," she added, "I was living with my husband. I had a pleasant home and servants. My husband, Alfred Dahlberg, was a physician, with a good practice, and I had everything I could wish for. Then Grace came between us, and now I have neither home, means nor reputation. I have had to suffer humiliation and shame, and the man who is responsible for it all, instead of trying to make my lot easier, has treated me cruelly."

The Dahlbergs were married twenty years ago. Mrs. Dahlberg was at that time a beautiful woman, and care and sorrow have not wholly erased the beauty of a face made prematurely old. There was, at the time, Mrs. Dahlberg says, a friend of her husband, a young building contractor, who has since become the millionaire William Grace, president of the well-known building firm which bears his name. This is the man whom Mrs. Dahlberg charges with having caused all her troubles.

When Grace first paid attentions to her, she says, she scorned him and threatened to go at once to her husband and tell him of his friend's perfidy.

"If I had," she said yesterday, "Grace would not be living to-day." Finally, however, his protestations won her over, she says, and for six years she lived a double life. Then, through a letter, her husband discovered the truth and left her. A short

time afterward the husband entered suit against the millionaire to the amount of \$100,000, charging alienation of his wife's affections. The case has never come to trial.

Once only was there any attempt made toward affecting a reconciliation with the husband. Then, with the welfare of her three little children—Alfred, Lella and Antoinette—the oldest only 11 years of age, in mind, the mother went to her husband and asked him to take her back. Dahlberg refused.

Driven at last to desperation, Mrs. Dahlberg says she applied to Grace for help, and it was then, according to the charges in the suit that has been filed, that Grace uttered the slander which turned her former love for him to hatred. In the presence of the crowds of people on the street she alleges that he spurned her, called her vile names, and, dragging her across the street, drove her away.

Since then, she claims, she has been arrested no less than four times, each time on a charge which she says was unfounded, and which was actuated only with the intent of driving her to madness.

"I will wipe you from the earth," she asserts Grace said to her. "And," the woman added, with tears coursing down her face, "he has almost succeeded in doing it."

BLOODHOUNDS TRACK THE TRAIN ROBBERS

Four Men, Believed to Be the Gang That Held Up Rock Island Train, Are Caught.

DES MOINES, Ia., Sept. 20.—After a persistent cross-country hunt, with the aid of bloodhounds, four men, believed by the police to be part of the gang who held up and robbed the Rock Island train, were captured this afternoon. The captures in each case were effected without bloodshed, although all of the men were heavily armed.

The prisoners answer in every detail the description of the train robbers given to the police by the train crew. Their conduct and the fact that they were armed after the manner of the bandits who held up the train lead the detectives who made the captures to believe that they are the right men.

Chicago men figured prominently in effecting the capture. Detective Bredle, of Chicago, connected with the Rock Island's secret service, and Sheriff McArthur, of Davenport, made the first capture about 4 o'clock this afternoon.

They were working independently, while Detectives Eddy, Shields, Her and Romeler, of Chicago, were following a pack of bloodhounds on a trail less than a mile away.

The man hunt had been abandoned this forenoon, and the hope of capturing the bandits in that vicinity was completely given up at noon. At that time, however, a fresh pack of bloodhounds arrived from Knoxville and took the trail with enthusiasm at the straw stack where the five men had been seen hiding. The dogs led the posse in an opposite direction from that taken yesterday, heading toward the heavy timber along the Skunk river, west of Winfield and in the direction of Brighton.

Bredle and McArthur learned from farmers that two strangers, acting suspiciously, had been seen in that neighborhood early to-day.

They traced the men from house to house until they eventually overtook them. Their demand that the men surrender was promptly obeyed, though the prisoners were heavily armed. Some hours later two men were captured as they were about to board an Iowa Central passenger train, west bound, at the Brighton depot.

The pair denied all connection with the others and gave their names as Martin and Harris. They sullenly maintained that they were innocent. They were armed and were too alert and well-groomed for tramps.

COAST LINE TERMINALS.

Wharves and Piers to Be Built Costing \$1,000,000.

WILMINGTON, N. C., Sept. 20.—E. B. Pleasant, chief engineer of the Atlantic Coast Line Railroad, has advertised for sealed proposals for the construction of wharves and piers and for the grading of tracks and yards at the proposed export terminal at Jacksonville. The work will require approximately 250,000 lineal feet of piling, 2,000,000 feet of lumber and 50,000 cubic yards of earth excavation. It is the purpose of the Atlantic Coast Line, among other things, to build warehouses and three piers 400 feet long, with three tracks on each, to deep water in the St. Johns, where ships can load. It is believed that the work will involve an outlay of about \$1,000,000.

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Assistant District Attorney—E. M. Showalter.

U. S. Marshal—Charles D. Elliott.

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Judge of the Intermediate Court—U. S. Kendall.

Prosecuting Attorney—Charles Powell.

Sheriff—Marcellus A. Jolliff.

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Clerk of the County Court—Geo. M. Jacobs.

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